

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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P R 201015Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY MASERU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6942
AMEMBAYSY GABORONE PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MASERU 0521

GABORONE FOR AMBASSADOR NORLAND

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, LT, SF
SUBJECT: BORDER SHOOTING INCIDENT AND DETERIORATING GOL-SAG
RELATIONS

REF: MASERU 0035

1. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. SUMMARY. THIS CABLE PROVIDES A BACKGROUND
SYNOPSIS OF DETERIORATING GOL-SAG RELATIONS OVER THE LAST SIX
MONTHS, COPIES OF GOL AND SAG CABLE NOTES CONCERNING A RECENT
SHOOTING OF A MOSOTHO WOMAN AND AN EMBASSY COMMENT ON THE PRESENT
MOOD OF GOL AS REFLECTED BY THESE NOTES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE LEVEL OF HOSTILITY AND PARANOIA REFLECTED IN THE NOTES
CITED BELOW CAN BE UNDERSTOOD ONLY BY RECOUNTING THE DETERIORATION
IN GOL/SAG RELATIONS OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS. PRIOR TO THE
INDEPENDENCE OF TRANSKEI, GOL-SAG RELATIONS, WHILE NEVER CORDIAL,
WERE BUSINESSLIKE AND TEMPERED BY AN AWARENESS OF LESOTHO'S
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OVERWHELMING DEPENDENCE ON SOUTH AFRICA. SAG'S TRADITIONAL
ARROGANCE AND INSENSITIVITY TOWARD LESOTHO WERE TOLERATED OUT
OF SELF-INTEREST. TRANSKEI'S INDEPENDENCE (OCT. 26 1976) HOWEVER,
WAS A TURNING POINT IN GOL-SAG RELATIONS. GOL, HEARTENED BY INTER-
NATIONAL REJECTION OF TRANSKEI, DEFIED ITS POWERFUL NEIGHBOR AND
REJECTED TRANSKEI'S SO-CALLED INDEPENDENCE. IN EXPECTATION OF
SAG PRESSURES, AND STIFFENED BY THE SUPPORT VOICED AT THE DEC. 1976

AAI CONFERENCE IN LESOTHO, GOL SOUGHT THE SUPPORT OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL. THE UNANIMOUS SUPPORT OF THE UNSC IN LATE DECEMBER FOR THE LESOTHO COMPLAINT AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH BOTH SURPRISED AND ELATED GOL, LED TO A FURTHER HARDENING OF BOTH GOL AND SAG POSITIONS. SAG RETALIATED IN JANUARY 1977 BY WITHDRAWING THE MAIZE AND WHEAT SUBSIDY, HARASSING BASOTHO AT BORDER POINTS AND RIDICULING GOL'S CLAIM OF A BORDER CLOSURE. A DETRIORATING SPIRAL WAS SET IN MOTION. GOL THEN LASHED OUT AT SAG WITH INVECTIVE OVER BORDER INCIDENTS AND LEVELED ACCUSATIONS AT SA MEDIA FOR MIS-REPRESENTATION AND OUTRIGHT DISTORTION OF THE FACTS CONCERNING THE BORDER ISSUE. END CONFIDENTIAL.

3. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS PASSED TO EMBASSY COPIES OF CABLE EXCHANGES BETWEEN GOL AND SAG CONCERNING THE SHOOTING OF A MOSOTHO WOMAN ALONG THE LESOTHO-SOUTH AFRICAN BORDER. THE MINISTRY ALSO CONVEYED ORALLY FOREIGN MINISTER MOLAPO'S REQUEST THAT CONTENTS OF CABLES BE TRANSMITTED TO DEPARTMENT AND AMBASSADOR NORLAND.

4. GOL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SENT FOLLOWING PROTEST APRIL 6 TO SAG DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

BEGIN QUOTE

FROM: FOREIGN MASERU

TO: DFA PRETORIA

NO.)R

6TH APRIL 1977

COMPLIMENTS

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS THE HONOUR TO INFORM THE
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DEPARTMENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO WISHES TO LODGE A PROTEST IN THE STRONGEST WORDS POSSIBLE WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA REGARDING THE SHOOTING AND WOUNDING OF A DEFENCELESS MOSOTHO WOMAN, MISS MPHO TSHABALALA AT BUTHA-BUTHE YESTERDAY. SHE WAS SHOT AND WOUNDED BY A WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN IN THE AREA OF POLICE STATIONS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE RIVER. TO ADD INSULT TO INJURY SHE WAS SHOT ON THE LESOTHO SIDE OF THE BORDER. IN CONSEQUENCE SHE HAS BEEN HOSPITALIZED IN BUTHA-BUTHE.

THIS PROVACTIVE INCIDENT IS AN ADDITIONAL PROOF OF THE RECKLESS MANNER IN WHICH WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS REGARD LIVES OF LESOTHO CITIZENS. YOUR OFFICE IS LITOERED WITH SUCH PROTESTS FROM US.

THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN MUST TAKE NOTE THAT SINCE LESOTHO'S INDEPENDENCE IN 1966, LESOTHO CITIZENS HAVE BEEN RECKLESSLY SHOT BY SOUTH AFRICANS ON THE BORDER OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES. THESE INCIDENTS ARE INCREASING AT AN ALARMING RATE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTENTHAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN A SINGLE INCIDENT EMANATING FROM

LESOTHO SIDE. ALL OUR PROTESTS HAVE GONE UNREDRESSED AND HAVE RECEIVED NO SATISFACTION.

OUR COURTS ARE OPEN TO SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZENS BUT A CULTURED SOUTH AFRICAN REPRESENTING WESTERN CIVILIZATION DARES SHOOT A DEFENCELESS WOMAN WHEN THE MATTER COMPLAINED OF COULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO COURT.

WHILST WE SHALL NEVER BE DRAWN INTO A LAGER, LESOTHO GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THAT THESE SHOOTINGS INDICATE THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS DECLARED WAR ON LESOTHO AND HAS BESIEGED US.
HIGHEST CONSIDERATION
FOREIGN MASERU END QUOTE.

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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ZO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6943
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C B N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MASERU 0521

SAG REPLIED APRIL 7 AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN QUOTE
FROM SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CAPETOWN
TO FOREIGN MASERU NO. K10
RPTD SECEXTERN PRETORIA (FOR ATTENTION MR. BRAND) NO. 249
7 APRIL 1977
COMPLIMENTS
SECEXTERN HAS THE HONOUR TO ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF FOREIGN'S
TELEX NO. 194 DATED 7 APRIL 1977 AND TO STATE THAT THE MATTER
IS BEING INVESTIGATED URGENTLY.

IT IS CLEAR FROM FOREIGN'S TELEX THAT THE COMPLAINT CONCERNS

THE ALLEGED ACTIONS OF A PRIVATE SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZEN. PURELY ON THE FACE OF THIS, THE WILD ASUERTION IN THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH OF FOREIGN'S TELEX THAT 'SOUTH AFRICA HAS DECLARED WAR ON LESOTHO' IS OBVIOUSLY NONSENSE.
HIGHE T CONSIDERATION. END QUOTE. END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: GOL'S INCREASINGLY INTEMPERATE AND HOST LE RHETORIC REFLECTS AN ALMOST SWAGGERING BELIEF THAT SAG'S HANDS ARE TIAD BY WORLD OPINION AND THAT THE ECONOMIC
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RETRIBUTION IT COULD INFLICT ON LESOTHO WILL BE REMEDIED BY THE LORD COMMUNITY. SAG SEEMS TO HAVE BADLY MISCALCULATED IF IT THOUGHT THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE MAIZE AND WHEAT SUBSIDY AND A LITTLE BORDER HARASSMENT WOULD BRING LESOTHO BACC INTO LINE. IT SEEMS CLEAR TO OBSERVERS HERE THAT GOL WILL NEVER RETURN TO THE DAYS OF TRYING TO BE GOOD NEIGHBORS WITH SOUTH AFRICA. THE LONG-HARBORED HATE AND ANGER ATIWHITE CALLOUSNESS AND ARROGANCE HAS SURFACED AND IS NOT LIKELY TO BE SUBMERGED AGAIN.

THOUGH IT IS DIFFICULT TO PERCEIVE WHAT GOL OR SAG HOPE TO RATIONALLY GAIN BY INCREASING HOSTILITY AND CONFRONTATION, THE EMBASSY HAS A HINT GOL MAY TRY TO EXPLOIT THIS PARTICULAR INCIDENT AND POSSIBLY OTHERS TO FURTHER ADVANCE ITS ASSERTION IN WORLD FORA THAT IT IS THE DEFENSELESS AND AGGRIEVED PARTY TO SAY BULLYING.
ENDS
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STOKES

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